



UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/933,805	08/22/2001	Tatuya Ninomiya	500.33021CX5	8027

24956 7590 01/23/2006

MATTINGLY, STANGER, MALUR & BRUNDIDGE, P.C.
1800 DIAGONAL ROAD
SUITE 370
ALEXANDRIA, VA 22314

EXAMINER

PATEL, HETUL B

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

2186

DATE MAILED: 01/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	09/933,805	NINOMIYA ET AL.	
	Examiner	Art Unit	
	Hetul Patel	2186	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 03 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 04 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 21,23,24,26,27,29-32,34-39 and 41-55 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 21,23,24,26,27,29-32,34-39 and 41-55 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413) |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 3) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| Paper No(s)/Mail Date <u>10/26/05, 11/04/05, 12/08/05</u> . | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

1. This action is responsive to communication filed on January 04, 2006. Claims 21, 23-24, 26-27, 29-32, 34-39 and 41-55 are presented again for examination.
2. The IDS filed on 10/26/2005, 11/04/2005 and 12/08/2005 have been received and carefully considered.
3. Applicant's arguments have been considered but they are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 21, 23-24, 26-27, 29-32, 37-39, 43-47 and 51-53 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashemi et al. (USPN: 5,337,414), hereinafter Hashemi in view of Nakamura et al. (USPN: 5,388,013) hereinafter, Nakamura.

As per claims 21 and 24, Hashemi teaches the invention as claimed, including a storage system comprising:

Art Unit: 2186

- a plurality of host adaptors, which can be coupled to at least one host device, and which form interfaces for the host device (e.g. see figure 1, elements 4a-d and 8c1 and 8c2, column 3, lines 57-60 and 66-68; column 4, lines 1, 11-15 and column 9, lines 4-9);
- a plurality of storage devices for storing therein data received from the host device (e.g. see column 9, lines 30-34);
- a plurality of disk adaptors each coupled to one of said storage devices, which form interfaces for said storage devices (e.g. see figure 1, elements 8d1 and 8d2, column 4, lines 27-43; column 9, line 62 and column 10, lines 24-30);
- a cache (a plurality of caches) for temporarily storing therein data transferred between said host adaptors and said disk adaptors (e.g. see figure 1a, elements 24c1 or 24c2 or 24d1 or 24d2);
- two buses coupled to said host adaptors, said disk adaptors, and said cache, and which operate as a pair of buses for transferring data among said host adaptors, said disk adaptors, and said cache, wherein each bus in said two buses is adapted to transfer different data (e.g. see figure 1a, elements 6a-b), and a memory for storing information indicating status which of said two buses is available for use due to a failure in the other of said two buses (e.g. see column 9, lines 28-41), and

- wherein upon failure one of said two buses is used based on said status information stored in said memory (e.g. see the abstract and Col. 2, lines 2-5; Col. 3, lines 52-56).

However, Hashemi does not teach the further limitation of each of said host adaptors includes a format converter to convert data from CKD format to the FBA format and storing the FBA format data in the cache memory. Nakamura, on the other hand, teaches a host adapter (the magnetic disk controller, 5 in Fig. 1) includes a data storage format converter that is used to convert data of a count key data (CKD) format sent from the host device (the host computer, 1 in Fig. 1), i.e. in a case where one of said host adaptors, being coupled to a host device, receives the data of the CKD format from the host device, into data of a fixed block architecture (FBA) format and sending the converted data of the FBA format to said cache memory (6 in Fig. 1) (e.g. see Col. 11, lines 12-17 and Fig. 1). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to employ the format converter as taught by Nakamura in the storage system of Hashemi so the data stored in a CKD format (variable length record format adopted in a magnetic disc system of a general-purpose computer) sent from the host device is converted into data of a FBA format (fixed length format which is adopted in a commercially available miniature type magnetic disc) suitable for the storage devices. By doing so, it would provide improved compatibility by allowing Hashemi's storage system (a) to serve broader range of applications, (b) to be compatible with wide variety of storage devices

with different formats (e.g. Magnetic disks, optical disks, flash memory etc.). Therefore, it is being advantageous.

As for claims 23 and 26, Hashemi discloses the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Hashemi teaches that said memory can be referred to by an external processor (e.g. see column 9, line 1 et seq.).

As per claims 27, 37, 43 and 51, Hashemi teaches the invention as claimed, including a storage system comprising:

- a plurality of host adaptors coupled to at least one host device, which from interfaces for the host device (e.g. see figure 1, elements 4a-d and 8c1 and 8c2, column 3, lines 57-60 and 66-68; column 4, lines 1, 11-15 and column 9, lines 4-9);
- a plurality of storage devices for storing therein data transferred from the host device (e.g. see column 9, lines 30-34);
- a plurality of disk adaptors coupled to said storage devices, which form interfaces for said storage devices (e.g. see figure 1, elements 8d1 and 8d2, column 4, lines 27-43; column 9, line 62 and column 10, lines 24-30);
- at least one cache memory unit (a plurality of caches) for temporarily storing therein data transferred between said host adaptors and said disk adaptors (e.g. see figure 1a, elements 24c1 or 24c2 or 24d1 or 24d2); and
- at least one path, coupled to said host adaptors, said disk adaptors, and said at least one cache memory unit, which transfers data among said host

adaptors, said disk adaptors, and said at least one cache memory unit (e.g. see column 9, lines 28-41 and Fig. 1).

However, Hashemi does not teach the further limitation of each of said host adaptors includes a format converter to convert data from CKD format to the FBA format and storing the FBA format data in the cache memory. Nakamura, on the other hand, teaches a host adapter (the magnetic disk controller, 5 in Fig. 1) includes a data storage format converter that is used to convert data of a count key data (CKD) format sent from the host device (the host computer, 1 in Fig. 1), i.e. in a case where one of said host adaptors, being coupled to a host device, receives the data of the CKD format from the host device, into data of a fixed block architecture (FBA) format and sending the converted data of the FBA format to said cache memory (6 in Fig. 1) (e.g. see Col. 11, lines 12-17 and Fig. 1). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to employ the format converter as taught by Nakamura in the storage system of Hashemi so the data stored in a CKD format (variable length record format adopted in a magnetic disc system of a general-purpose computer) sent from the host device is converted into data of a FBA format (fixed length format which is adopted in a commercially available miniature type magnetic disc) suitable for the storage devices. By doing so, it would provide improved compatibility by allowing Hashemi's storage system (a) to serve broader range of applications, (b) to be compatible with wide variety of storage devices with different formats (e.g. Magnetic disks, optical disks, flash memory etc.). Therefore, it is being advantageous.

As per claims 29 and 44, Hashemi discloses the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Hashemi teaches the storage system further comprising a shared memory unit (CIM/DIM in Figs. 1A and 1B) which stores therein control information for controlling the host adaptors, the disk adaptors and said at least one cache memory unit. (e.g. see Col. 3, lines 24-33 and Figs. 1A and 1B).

As per claims 30 and 45, Hashemi discloses the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Hashemi teaches the storage system wherein said at least one cache memory unit (buffers 24c1-2 and 2d1-2 in Fig. 1A) has a plurality of cache memories arranged in a duplexed form, and the shared memory unit (CIM/DIM) has a plurality of shared memories arranged in a duplexed form (e.g. see Fig. 1A).

As per claims 31-32, 38-39, 46-47 and 52-53, Hashemi discloses the claimed invention as described above and furthermore, Hashemi teaches the storage system wherein said at least one path (Futurebuses 6a and 6b in Fig. 1A) is a duplexed common bus, which includes:

- a control information bus coupled to the host adaptors and the disk adaptors, which transfers control information, and
- a data transfer bus, coupled to the host adaptors, the disk adaptors and the at least one cache memory unit, which transfers data among the host adaptors, the disk adaptors and the at least one cache memory unit (e.g. see Fig. 1A and Col. 3, lines 50-65).

5. Claims 34-35, 41-42, 48-49 and 54-55 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashemi in view Nakamura, further in view of Cheney et al. (USPN: 5,285,456), hereinafter, Cheney.

As per claims 34, 41, 48 and 54, the combination of Hashemi and Nakamura disclose the claimed invention as described above wherein the format converter converts data of CKD into data of FBA format. However, Hashemi and Nakamura fail to teach that the format converter adds a longitudinal redundancy check (LRC) code to the data of the FBA format. Cheney, on the other hand, teaches that by adding the LRC code to the data, integrity of the control information can be verified (e.g. see Col. 4, lines 9-14). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to modify the storage system of Hashemi by adding the CRC code to the data as taught by Cheney. In doing so, it would allow the integrity of the information data and the control information to be verified when they are transferred within the system; therefore, enhancing the system's reliability.

As per claims 35, 42, 49 and 55, the combination of Hashemi and Nakamura disclose the claimed invention as described above. However, Hashemi and Nakamura fail to teach that the host adaptors receive the physical address information in the CKD format with the cyclic redundancy check (CRC) code on a storage space of the storage device. Cheney, on the other hand, teaches that by adding the CRC code to the data, the errors generated during transmitting the data from the host devices to the storage devices can be detected (e.g. see Col. 2, lines 40-62). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to

modify the storage system of Hashemi by adding the CRC code to the data as taught by Cheney. In doing so, it would allow the integrity of the information data and the control information to be verified when they are transferred within the system; therefore, enhancing the system's reliability.

6. Claims 36 and 50 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Hashemi in view Nakamura, further in view of Dixon et al. (USPN: 4,637,024), hereinafter, Dixon.

As per claims 36 and 50, the combination of Hashemi and Nakamura disclose the claimed invention as described above. However, Hashemi and Nakamura, fail to teach that the format converter adds the ECC and CRC code to the data before writing it to the storage devices. Dixon, on the other hand, teaches that by using the CRC code, the data can be checked/verified for any errors and if any error found in the data, using the ECC, that error can be fixed (e.g. see Col. 3, lines 24-39). Accordingly, it would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time of the current invention was made to employ the step of adding the ECC and CRC code to the data before storing it to the storage devices as taught by Dixon in the system taught by Hashemi and Nakamura. In doing so, the data get checked and corrected before it get stored in the storage device.

Remarks

7. As to the remark, Applicant asserted (in the amendment sent on 12/08/2005) that during the interview, Examiner was agreed that Aida reference is simply a converter provided between two separate information processing apparatuses not a converter provided in a host adaptor as illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2 of the present application.

Examiner respectfully traverses Applicant's remark for the following reasons:

Examiner agreed with the Applicant's assertion that Examiner was agreed during last interview on December 06, 2005 that Aida reference does not disclose/teach a converter in a host adaptor as illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2 of the present application and claimed in the proposed amendment. All independent claims (i.e. claims 21, 24, 27, 37, 43 and 51) of the proposed amendment also had the limitation, "... a format converter for converting ... (CKD) format ... into ... (FBA) format ... before being stored in said cache ...", which was previously presented in the response filed on August 08, 2005. Examiner agreed with Applicant, during the interview, that this limitation is not taught by Aida reference or any other prior arts of record. However, this limitation is removed from all claims in the latest amendment filed on January 04, 2006. Therefore, all independent claims are being rejected by the combination of Hashemi and Nakamura prior arts as previously presented.

Conclusion

8. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Hetul Patel whose telephone number is 571-272-4184. The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 8-4:30.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Matt Kim can be reached on 571-272-4182. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

HBP
HBP



MATTHEW D. ANDERSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER